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Update on Water Quality

United States Department of Agriculture

Progress Update #5, July 2, 1990

Water Quality Policy Revision Nearly Complete

The Working Group has revised existing USDA water quality policies. A single, comprehensive USDA policy for water quality protection and enhancement is being developed to replace the two existing USDA water quality policies—on ground-

water quality and nonpoint source contamination. The final draft policy has been forwarded to the Secretary's Policy Coordinating Council for approval and signature by Secretary Yeutter. *Contact: Vivan Jennings, ES, 202-447-5623.*

SCS-EPA Workshop Held

The annual SCS-EPA water quality workshop was held May 7-10 in Seattle, WA, to strengthen coordination of water quality programs between the two agencies. Major focus of the workshop was discussion of problems encountered in project implementation under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act.

Seattle was selected as the site for this year's workshop because it allowed participants to view water quality treatment results in the Puget Sound National Estuary. Also, the EPA region that includes Seattle is the only one with water quality liaison officers from three USDA agencies (ES, FS, and SCS). *Contact: Peter Tidd, SCS, 202-382-1870.*

Research Funds Transferred to Midwest

ARS and CSRS have transferred funds to researchers in the five Management Systems Evaluation Areas (MSEA's) in the Midwest Initiative. (See Update #4.) States, other Federal agencies, and industry

are contributing an additional \$2.3 million in funds and equipment to supplement the \$4 million in Federal funding for the research. *Contact: Dick Amerman, OSEC, 202-447-5979.*

AGU to Include Water Quality Session at December Meeting

Two members of the MSEA program management team, Charles Onstad, ARS, and Michael Burkart, USGS, have been asked to organize a half-day session, "Agricultural Chemicals and Water Quality," at the December American Geophysical Union Western Meeting in San Francisco. They have called for

papers on the following topics: (1) processes affecting fate of nutrients and pesticides; (2) occurrence of these chemicals in the hydrologic system; (3) agricultural practices that reduce risk of chemical contamination of water; and (4) methods of evaluating chemical contamination over large areas. *Contact: Dick Amerman, OSEC, 202-447-5979.*

Water Information Clearinghouse Established

USDA is cooperating with the U.S. Geological Survey in establishment of a water information clearinghouse at USGS. USGS's charges from Congress are to disseminate information on groundwater

protection and on remedies for contaminated groundwater, and to explore the relationship between the quality of ground and surface waters. *Contact: Janice Kemp, NAL, 301-344-3875.*

1990 Projects Reviewed, '91 Projects Planned

ASCS, ES, and SCS held a successful regional water quality technology exchange meeting June 5-7 in Providence, RI. EPA and USGS were also represented at the meeting. Planners and leaders for current demonstration projects, hydrologic unit areas, and special projects in the Northeast exchanged ideas on successes, problems, and procedures for these projects.

This was the second of four planned regional technology exchange meetings. The first was held in Little Rock, AR, in

April; the next will be in Reno, NV, on July 17-19; and the final meeting will be in St. Paul, MN, Aug. 14-16.

Interagency teams from ASCS, ES, and SCS have received and are reviewing proposals for fiscal year 1991 demonstration projects, hydrologic unit areas, and water quality special projects. The agencies are planning to select 1991 projects during the summer. *Contact: Jim McMullen, ASCS, 202-447-6221; Fred Swader, ES, 202-447-5369; Peter Tidd, SCS, 202-382-1870.*

Fact Sheet on Water Quality Projects Available

ASCS, ES, and SCS have jointly prepared and issued a fact sheet on the 37 hydrologic unit areas, 8 water quality demonstration projects, and 40 water quality special projects. (See Update #2.) The fact sheet

describes the three kinds of projects and lists the name and location of each.

Contact: Ray Waggoner, ASCS, 202-447-5237; Pat Calvert, ES, 202-447-6133; George Stapleton, SCS, 202-447-4543.

Minnesota Water Quality Tour Planned

Federal water quality policy and program leaders will get a firsthand look at research and demonstration projects in Minnesota. EPA and USDA have organized a trip for July 9-11 to brief some 30 selected officials in USDA, EPA, NOAA, and USGS on:

- *Existing research results* being applied by farmers at the Anoka Sand Plains demonstration project, a cooperative project of ES and SCS;


- *Planned research* at the Northern Corn Belt Sand Plains Management Systems Evaluation Area, conducted cooperatively

by ARS, CSRS, the Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station, and USGS;

- *Research needs*, and how the various agencies will identify and support needed investigations.

A major purpose of the tour is to ensure continued coordination of research and technology transfer among the Federal agencies with water quality programs.

The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency and the University of Minnesota Center for Agricultural Impacts on Water Quality will also be involved. *Contact: Lee Bridgman, EPA, 202-382-5691.*



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